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## News



### Hot weather knocks out bees

It is not raining, temperatures are high, and the toll on bees, flowers and plants might seriously damage the Italian honey harvest: "it's hard to speak numbers right now, because we still have some feeble hopes, but a 30 or 40% drop might be in the cards compared to the average harvest", Francesco Panella, President of Unaapi, the association of Italian bee-keepers, said. And this crisis of Italian beehives might have serious consequences for the whole environment, because of the extreme importance bee pollination has for agriculture. Acacias, citrus fruits and mixed flower honeys are going down, and eucalyptus is at risk of disappearing...



SMS

### Cheers, Tasca d'Almerita!

We really like the latest idea from Tasca d'Almerita, one of Sicily's leading winemakers, which has transformed itself into a collective promoter of many small food excellences of its region with its "NaturainTasca.it" e-commerce website. It would be nice to see something like this "copied" in other places and by other protagonists of Italian wine, where leading winemakers, due to their history, prestige, economic muscle, distributive strength, brand awareness and so forth, could really help the cultural, social and economic fabric of an agricultural district. Because wine, which is the most prestigious and renowned Italian agricultural product in the world, is the only one that can successfully accomplish this mission. P.S. We've already tried it, to our great satisfaction!

## Report

### Sales in wine shops

In the midst of summer, Winenews asked some of Italy's most famous wine shops about season sales. The results are uneven: some, like Rome's Enoteca Trimani, have one sale per season and some, like Enoteca Ferrara, follow the regular sales of other shops. No sales for Siena's Enoteca Piccolomini, whose customers are mostly tourists, and none for Palermo's Picone, as they sell mostly seasonal wines. Discounts, then, are common for some and a no-no for others among Italian wine shops.



## First Page

### TTB & Vinality: an easier life for Italian wine

The U.S. is thirsty for Italian wine because people like it and because it means business, so both government authorities and entrepreneurial organizations want to make things easier for Italian producers, for the sake of all parties involved. This is the good news from last week's meeting between a delegation of Italian top winemakers (from Banfi to Ferrari, Zonin to Gruppo Italiano Vini, Allegrini to Terredora) and Vinality, on one side, and the U.S. Congressional Wine Caucus (with over 200 congressmen and 15 senators among its bipartisan ranks) and the Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau that regulates access to wine & spirits in the States, on the other. The meeting signalled "a more relaxed attitude" regarding the rules for importing Italian wine in the U.S. for the winemakers. Which translates into easier changes to the labels that used to be evaluated by the TTB on a case-by-case basis - consuming a lot of time and money in the process. From now on, moving information on the label, changing colours and text and the declaration of alcoholic content (if the change is not incompatible with the class and denomination of the type) will not need an entirely new Certificate of Label Approval (or "COLA" for short) from the TTB. "This would be a great opportunity for the Italian government", Bill Earle, Chairman of NABI, the National Association of Beverage Importers, said, "to review their rules on wines produced in Italy to be exported only. It would make sense, since some bottles will never see the Italian market, to free the producers from some restrictions that are mandatory for the domestic market, but not over here". The market would greatly benefit from such a move, since it would mean lower costs for producers, an easier time for importers and distributors in moving the product and lower price tags for consumers. A long walk indeed, since the "Old World" does not have quick reflexes. "That's why it is significant that Vinality promoted such a high-level meeting: the leaders of Congress need important stimuli". And the meeting was definitely that.

## Focus

### Italian tradition versus global warming

Italian wine enjoyed a boost in quality during the 1980s due to a new view of viticulture, which was no longer seen as a means to maximize yields, but as the way to get impeccable raw materials. A high number of plants per hectare, low yields per plant and small spacing of the vines were the main ingredients of this change, but this method might not be, according to experts Winenews has contacted, the best in the face of ever-rising temperatures. Wider spacing, higher yields and late traditional grape varieties might counter the imbalance of many of last decade's wines (high alcoholic content, low acidity and weaker aromas). The Italian school of viticulture might then be an antidote to this phenomenon, if the rush towards reducing working hours can be kept in check. Moreover, market forces can also deny the efforts needed to counter the effects of higher temperatures: but water, the planet's most important resource, is not infinite, and a radical (and costly) sea change might be on the horizon. 2012's yields, on a closing note, are predicted to be 5 to 20% lower in most Italian regions, but excellent quality, according to the growers' association Fedagri-Confcooperative.



www.vinalitytour.com



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## Wine & Food

### The "New World" has a trump card, and it's "on tap" wine

"On tap" wine is the key for exports coming from the "New World", a Rabobank report says. In the first 3 months of 2012, the volume of Argentinian wine grew 37.5% and its value 12.1%; "on tap" grew 131% and bottled dropped 7%. Same thing for "on tap" from Chile (up 62%) and South Africa (up 31%). Price is the main reason: in the U.S., the value of a litre of Argentinian wine more than doubled, from U.S. Dollars 0.83 to 1.74. Is this due perhaps to the current economic climate, where every penny counts, or is it a trend that's here to stay?

### For the record

#### ALS more widespread in the fields?

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis might have a higher incidence among growers, according to Judge Raffaele Guariniello of the Courthouse of Turin. Among soccer players the

incidence is 24 times higher than normal, but in 2011 alone, 123 cases were recorded among the growers of Piedmont. Pesticides might be the reason: the inquiry is continuing.

